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Senate passes Michigan Promise Grant legislation

LANSING – Legislation providing \$4,000 to students who complete two years of postsecondary education has been approved by the Michigan Senate and House of Representatives, said state Sen. Jason Allen, R-Traverse City.

Senate Bill 1335 creates the Michigan Promise Grant Act and repeals the Merit Award as of September 30, 2017.

“If our children are going to compete for jobs in a changing global economy, then they need to be highly educated,” Allen said. “The Michigan Promise Grant will help them obtain the education they need for the high-paying jobs of tomorrow.”

Approved by the Senate unanimously, the Michigan Promise Grant awards more money than previous programs.

It encourages students to stay in college once they are there and still allows students to receive funds up front if needed to get into college.

Students who perform well on the high school test and meet other established criteria would receive a grant in the amount of \$4,000 paid out in the following manner:

- \$1,000 in the first academic year.
- \$1,000 in the second academic year.
- \$2,000 after completing the equivalent of two years of postsecondary education with a 2.5 GPA or successfully completing a vocational program that does not award grades.

Students who do not perform well on or did not take the high school test, but enroll in postsecondary education within four years of graduation, finish the equivalent of two years of college and maintain a college GPA of 2.5 would receive \$4,000 after completing those two years.

If signed into law, the Michigan Promise Grant would first affect 2006-2007 high school graduates. The current Merit Award program will not be repealed until 2017, allowing those who have graduated in recent years up to four years to enroll in college and receive their money.

“If Michigan is going to be a leading force in the 21st Century, then we need to make sure that our children have the ability to receive the skills they need to succeed,” Allen said.

SB 1335 will now go to the governor’s desk.

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